

Carbondale Saint David's Day Dinner, March 1

Saint David's Society of Lackawanna County 102 Anniversary Celebration, March 3

This was our ninth annual dinner in Carbondale on Saint David's Day and, like all the others, it was a wonderful success. There were about 50 of us, not counting the Saint David's Welsh Male Chorus. As usual, we had fresh daffodils and tulips on each table, also on each table brewed tea in some of Joe Pascoe's lovely china pots, also home-made Welsh cookies. The traditional Welsh dinner served by the Ben-Mar was very good, and a big hit with all. I was very glad that Bob Davis (County Saint David's president) and his wife were there. I sat at their table, and they both enjoyed themselves a good deal. Rev. Posegate from the Methodist Church offered a very nice invocation.

There were seven members of the Hess family present, in support of Allison Hess's after-dinner remarks on her time in Wales. She is charming and engaging, attends Western Wayne High School, and her talk was very well received. Before the chorus performed, Barbara Campbell read a very nice poem about a Welsh choir and their performance, which was perfect for the occasion.

As always, the selections performed by the chorus were well received, especially the Irving Berlin medley. Mrs. Justin invited all present to sing with the chorus during the final numbers on the program, and the evening ended in a very wonderful atmosphere of friendship, cordiality, and patriotism.

The County's Saint David's dinner on March 3rd was OK. The people at the table where Joe and I sat were nice and we all enjoyed each other's company a great deal. The County dinner, on the whole, however, was disappointing: food was family style and was very mediocre (Welsh cookies on the tables, still in their packages from the grocery store), artificial daffodils on the tables, the room itself was too cold, the Lyric Consort (wonderfully talented singers, beautifully dressed in formal

clothes) was the wrong group for the event. The numbers that they sang were very academic and demonstrated their wonderful vocal ability, but their performance lacked warmth and enthusiasm and gusto. It seemed more appropriate for a graduate school academic recital than a Saint David's Day dinner. The toastmaster for the evening, the Rev. Arthur Davis, was not able to attend the dinner this year—which did not disappoint me at all. He is very common. The Gymanfa Ganu section of the program was very stiff and cold.

I was glad to get more information on the North American Festival of Wales that will take place in Scranton August 30—September 2, 2012. Joe and I will surely attend a couple of the main musical events in the festival.

I'm always glad/relieved when our Saint David's Day dinner is accomplished for the year: it's a very nice event and I always enjoy it a great deal, but there is a lot of planning that has to take place to guarantee the success of the event—and that planning has to start right after the first of the year. And there is always the worry about the weather: will there be a snow storm on March 1, making it necessary to re-schedule the dinner. One year, we held the dinner in weather conditions that should perhaps have prompted us to re-schedule, but we didn't.